

## **Nashua Special Olympics Honored With Gate City Light Award**

On April 14 at the Nashua Board of Aldermen meeting at City Hall, Nashua Special Olympics received the 2015 Gate City Light Award from Mayor Donnalee Lozeau and the Mayor's Volunteer Recognition Committee.

The award recognizes Nashua Special Olympics and its volunteers for generously sharing their time in providing support, positive energy and enthusiasm to the games and, at the same time, bringing a sense of community and encouragement to all athletes and their family members involved in Special Olympics.

"Nashua Special Olympics volunteers give an extraordinary amount of time to the children of Nashua," said Stacy Hynes, chair of the Mayor's Volunteer Recognition Committee. "More than 300 volunteers, after undergoing required background checks and orientation, support Nashua Special Olympics fall, summer and winter games and encourage athlete's participation in soccer, bowling, cross country, alpine and cross country skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, track and field, basketball, baseball and many other energetic sports."

Mayor Lozeau noted their volunteers' support is infectious. Nashua is an especially active affiliate of Special Olympics, a not-for-profit, world-wide organization devoted to providing organized sporting events for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. According to Dodi Mitchell, former Nashua program coordinator and parent of a Special Olympian, Nashua has many longtime and "tireless" volunteers who return year after year. She describes the Nashua Special Olympics experience "just as healing for families as it is for volunteers."

Accepting the 2015 Gate City Light Award from Mayor Lozeau on behalf of Nashua Special Olympics:

- Dodi Mitchell, former NSO program coordinator
- Isaac Hartigan, Ms. Mitchell's son and Special Olympian
- Diane Hammett, current NSO program coordinator
- Marcia Gardner, the first NSO local program coordinator
- Mary Ann Richard, longtime NSO volunteer

For more information on how to become a volunteer with the organization, go to <http://www.nashuaspecialolympics.org/>

### **About the Gate City Light Award**

The Gate City Light Award is bestowed annually by the Mayor's Volunteer Recognition Committee on behalf of the mayor of Nashua to recognize an agency and its volunteers for outstanding service to the people of the city. Nominations for the award can be sent to [hyness@nashua.edu](mailto:hyness@nashua.edu).

### **About the Mayor's Volunteer Recognition Committee**

In keeping with its mission of encouraging volunteerism citywide, the Mayor's Volunteer Recognition Committee looks not only to recognize volunteer efforts but also to support volunteer administrators' efforts to sustain the level of volunteerism in Nashua.

The committee maintains a web page of local agencies that use volunteers at [www.nashuanh.gov](http://www.nashuanh.gov) (click the [Living Here](#) tab).

Members of the Mayor's Volunteer Recognition Committee include Jean Barrett, Southern New Hampshire Medical Center; Margo Bell, Nashua Senior Center; Tom Dwane, Nashua Park & Recreation; Carol Luers Eyman, Nashua Public Library; Margaret Garneau, Nashua Historical Society; Stacy Hynes (chair), Nashua School District; Shaun Nelson, Nashua PAL; Tanya Prather, Home Health and Hospice Care; Linda Rioux, Humane Society of Greater Nashua; Norah Sutton, Hunt Community; and Carol Weeks, Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter.

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Attached photos: 2015 Gate City Light Award: Nashua Special Olympics

Pictured left to right: Marcia Gardner; Mary Ann Richard; Dodi Mitchell; Diane Hammett; Isaac Hartigan